

3.
Not FEAR, but LOVE.

A

SERMON

PREACHED

Before the Governors of the
Charity for Relief of poor Widows
and Orphans of Clergy-men, at
St. Mary le Bow, on the 7th. day
of Decemb. 1682.

By *Ar. BURY, DD. Rector of Exon.*
Coll. Oxon.

Ana, & fac quicquid vis. D. Aug.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS following Sermon (dear Reader) I send to wait upon the foregoing Treatise, as being there- to both very neer of Kin, and very Serviceable.

Neer of Kin, as being a Restorer of Communion with our Lord; for This laboreth to Restore our Communion with the Father and the Son, to that Full joy which St. John declareth to be the Summ of his message; as That doth, to Restore our Communion with the Son in his Flesh and Blood, to that Constancy which himself made due to it: And Serviceabl^e, not only in casting out the spirit of Fear, which is the common enemy; but particularly in caling to a more strickt account that Self-examination, which, as prescribed, and practised by the best, is the greatest discourager from the Lord's Supper. Here, the Sermon advanceth beyond the Treatise, denying it so much as adviseabl^e to a good person, either upon That or any Other occasion.

I say, to a good person: For to others I acknowledge the Prophets admonition always necessary, that they search and try their ways, and turn unto the Lord: but for those who have already do'n this necessary work, I see no Reason to be always repeting it. Many exhortations I find encoraging them to rejoice in the Lord alway, but not one to be always tormenting themselves, with examining their interest in Him.

This, and another (no less heterodox) assertion concerning Repentance, my design invited me to Touch, but my time forbad me to Hand, in any proportion to the need: which defect I have now endeavoured to supply by additional Annotations, wherein I have accounted for such texts as seem to discountenance them. More



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More or Less than this cannot be required: A sound mind cannot acknowledge the Scripture to be the adequate rule of faith and manners, yet fear to appeal to it. But to manage the appeal is not every one's work: it requireth good acquaintance with the Original language, some Academical improvement of the understanding, a Careful eye, a Free Heart, and a Good Key.

For the last of these we stand obliged to the great Erasmus, who hath furnished us with This, as the best key to understand mystical Scripture, that we observe what the speaker aims at.

With this key I have unlocked such texts as stood in my way: And I add this to Erasmus's rule, That as every particular word must be unlocked by the Author's aim, as by its proper key; so must every text, and its particular key, conform to the Universal Aim of the Gospel, as their Common and Supreme King-key.

This then I say and inculcate, and wish the whole Christian world would hear it. As sure as St. John hath proclaimed, that this is the design of the Gospel, that our joy may be full; as sure as St. Paul hath determined, that the Kingdom of Heaven is Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, &c. so sure it is, that the King-key, wherewith we must unlock every abstruse text of Scripture; the Test, whereby we must try every Doctrine of Faith or Manners; the Oracle, which we must consult in all doubts of Conscience; is this: Whatever will most exalt the Joy of the Wise and Good, is most properly Evangelical, and most certainly True.

Were this as generally believed, as throughout the whole New Testament it is plainly declared, how great, how happy a change would it work in the Christian world! How would it advance both the Honor and Power of the Gospel! How would it promote both the Joy of the Godly, and the Con-

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Conversion of the Profane ! How would it exalt the Glory of Gods love toward Us, and the Ardor of Ours towards Him !

Whereas, not to know what spirit we ate of, is the most pernicious Ignorance : It made our Lord's Apostles uncharitable to the Samaritans, and it still makes his best intentioned disciples Tormentors to Themselves, and Scare-crows to Others.

How serviceabl the discovery may be, God grant Experience may verify, as much as Reason promiseith, beyond what this poor Sermon can expresse ; which that it may contribute its mite, offers its self and its unvulgar assertions, to thy most deliberate examination.

But remember, we appeal from All Human authority, to Divine.

Rom.

Rom. X. 15.

How shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

WE shall not now confider these words as Part of an Argument, but as an Entire one. And since an Argument moveth more Gracefully (perhaps) from the Consequent to the Antecedent, but more Strongly from the Antecedent to the Consequent; it will be reasonab'l we should invert the Apostl's order: for so we find a *Sorites* of three pieces: *The Gospel is glad tidings, therefore the Messengers feet are beautiful, therefore no man may preach except he be sent.*

A Gospel! A Gospel of Peace! Glad tidings! Good things! How doth the Apost'l travel to bring forth an expression suitab'l? *Such glad tidings of great joy,* an host of Angels found worth a jorney from Heaven to bring; and perhaps for that reason its first Preachers were stiled *Angels of their Churches.*

And their reception was suitab'l both to this title, and those tidings: *You received me,* saith our Apost'l to the Galatians, *as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.* --- *If it had been possibl, you would have pluckt out your own eys, and have given them unto me.* And

here he saith not much less. *How beautiful are what ? the Lips, the Eyes, the Countenances ? yea, the very Feet ! the very feet of Messengers !* the feet of Messengers in those countries, where they must needs be *Dirty*, bicause naked. The charms of this beauty, like *Aaron's* ointment, run down from the Face to the very Feet.

And for this reason *no man may take this high honour to himself, but he that is caled of God, as was Aaron.* For as this encouraged our Apost'l in his work, so did it tempt popularly ambitious spirits to dubl his task : he must not only Execute his commission, but Assert it : His next words speak him no less troubled with Rivals, than with Persecutors ; and This makes it necessary to urge as in my Text, *they must not preach except they be sent.*

Thus may the order of my Text be inverted, thus may it make a weighty argument, not perhaps so proper to the Apost'l's own design, as to that which hath brought us together.

If the beauty of the Preachers descend from their Heads to their very Feet, needs must it descend from the head of the family to its neereft members : and you may justly expect, that from this expression I should take occasion to plead the right of those unhappy widows and orphans, who have nothing left them by their deceased husbands and fathers but their merits to administer.

But oh the disappointment ! Our Apost'l, after his so great boast of the *Galatians* love, quickly complains, *Where is the blessedness you speak of ?* And well may we demand, Where is this great beauty that so descends to the very feet ? Hath age withered it to a deformity equal to its youthful loveliness ? Our very
Eys

eyes are as loathsome as the primitive Preachers very feet were beautiful; and the deformity descends to our posterity as their only sure inheritance: yea some are so impious as to make God a party with themselves in the entayl, pretending, that Clergy-mens children are equally hated of God and Man, seldom or never attaining, either worth in themselves, or prosperity in the world. God be blessed, we are henceforth secured from that malicious slander; This conspicuous, and perhaps matchless assembly, having for ever rooted that false tongue out of its dwelling.

Yet, though the Tongue be rooted out, the Heart is still the same; so void of Love, so full of spite, against this once so honored calling, that we must think it a great bargain if we can compound for ordinary charity, and depose my Text to this poor plea, *The Preachers of the Gospel bring no evil tidings; therefore they deserve not to be hated.*

And since it is better to Cure an evil than to Complain of it, I conceive I cannot do better service to my Text, the Gospel, and its Preachers, than by removing the cause of the hatred we sink under; which indeed is no other than that Epidemical mistake, the root of all misery, the taking things by wrong hand.

The Gospel hath two handles, Threats, and Promises: its threats are Few, and its promises Many: its Threats shew us our danger, only that we may rejoice in our escape; its Promises immediately raise our joys. Threats therefore, both in quantity and design, sit upon the face of the Gospel, as beauty-spots do upon that of a fair Lady; here one, and there another, to this only end, that by their vanquished blackness they may set off the lustre of the beauty

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which

which is to adorn the very feet ; but by the unhappy officiousness of melancholy messengers, those spots have been enlarged to a visor, which so cover the face of Religion, that we cannot see its Joys for its Fears ; and the very *grace of God which bringeth salvation*, appeareth like the inhumane Nero, saying, *Let them Hate me, so they Fear me.*

This ugly visor shall I endeavor to pull off, as my Text directs me, by two Propositions.

1. *The Gospel doth not design to bring us to God by Fear, but by Love :* For it is a Gospel of Peace, glad tidings of good things.

2. *The mistake of this is the cause that the Gospel and its Preachers are so hated by the world :* For if Glad tidings make the messenger beautiful, Evil tidings must make him loathsome.

I. **T**HE Gospel doth not draw men to God by Fear, but by Love.

This, as it is clearly exprest in my Text, so is it almost in every page of the New Testament : I shall instance but in one or two places more, which expressly offer one handle, and reject the other.

In this same Epistle *ch. 8 v. 15.* our Apost'l declareth as clearly as possib'l, *You have not received the spirit of bondage again fear, but the spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father :* And no less clearly, *2 Tim. 1. 7. God hath not given us the spirit of Fear, but of Power, of Love, and of a Sound mind.* In the former place he opposeth the spirit of the Gospel to That of the Law ; and in the later, he vieth with the Philosophers, who pretend to exalt the mind to the highest freedom and perfection.

If this can be yet more clear, *St John* hath made it so :

so: for with pomp unmatched by any other pen, he ushereth his first Epistle with This proclamation, *These things we write unto you, that your joy may be full: and throughout the whole body of the following Epistle exalteth Love, as the only way to this fulness of Joy; ch. 4. v. 18. There is no fear in Love, but Love when it is perfected casteth out fear, because Fear hath Torment.*

It is impossib'l to find Plainer, and therefor needs to seek for More declarations of this truth: Nothing can remain, but that we reconcile them with such other words of Scripture as seem to contradict them. Two such especially there are: One spoken by our Lord, and another by our same Apostl: *to which may be reduced all others of the same air. These two therefore if we can reconcile, we shall both State and Clear the truth.

1. Our Apostl himself seemeth to contradict this: Phil. 2, 12. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* Doth not this offer salvation by that hand which but now he rejected?

That we may now or at any other time reconcile appearances of contradiction, we must carefully consider which of the two Propositions may best be brought to compliance.

It is plain, that what we have heard declared against Fear, cannot be bent to any other sense: we must therefor try whether the *fear and trembling*, which he recommendeth to the *Philippians*, may agree both with his declaration in two other Epistles, that *we have not received the spirit of fear*; or with his exhortation in the same Epistle, *ch. v. Rejoyce in the Lord evermore, and again I say rejoyce.*

* See Annot. 1.

To find out this, it is necessary we look about us, and see how he useth the same phrase upon other occasions, possibly it may be an Idiom.

Twice more we find him at the same phrase, and in both places his meaning will very well comply with Love and Joy. *Eph. 6. 5. Servants obey your Masters with Fear and Trembling.* What? doth not a Servant please both God and his Master better, if he Obey him with Love and Chearfulness? And what shall we say to the 9th. verse, *And you Masters do the same things to Them.* Must Masters also treat their Servants with Fear and Trembling? Yes, but such as may circulate between the best Masters, and the best Servants; even such as himself explaineth by good will, v. 7.

This possibly will be plainer by *2 Cor. 7. 15. His inward affection is more abundant towards you, while he remembreth the obedience of you all, how with Fear and Trembling you received him.*

Titus came in kindness to visit them, and they welcomed him with such endearing caresses, as made his (already great) inward affection more abundant than before: Here certainly the Fear and Trembling which so welcomed and heightned Love, must be so far from excluding it and Joy, that they import an extraordinary measure of them.

Yea, we need look no farther for a good light, whereby to see the meaning of this phrase in That his exhortation to the *Philippians*, than the encouragement wherewith he quickneth them in the words immediately following: *For it is God which worketh in you both to Will and to Do of his εὐδοξία, good will.* It is the very same word wherewith the Angels brought their glad tidings of great joy, and it were strange

strange if out of the same breath should come Gladness and Fear, Joy and Trembling.

That we may not seem bent wholly to pull down the obvious sence without bringing a better in place, this we offer as the Apostl's meaning: *It was only the iudicia, the loving kindness of God, which wrought in you the desire of salvation: and the same loving kindness will crown That desire with success, if it be attended with endeavor: do you therefor your part with such affection, as shall make you even Tremble again.*

And that we may give account of the Idiom as well as of the Argument; we must observe, that Any passion whatever, if vehement, will cause Trembling: But bicaus this is most visib'l in Fear, therefor Fear is added to expresse the certainty of Trembling, as Trembling is used to expresse the vehemence of the Passion.

2. HAVING Thus interpreted one saying of our Apostl's by another, we com now to do our Savior the same service, who also seemeth to contradict our position, *Lu. 12. 4 I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: but I will forwarn you whom you shall fear: Fear Him, which after he hath killed you, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him.*

It is plain, that Fear in this place can signifie no other than the Properest, and no less than the Greatest; and is enforced by our Lord in the most pressing manner; inculcated by sundry repetitions, and urged with a most dreadful reason. This cannot be denied, but must be interpreted by our Lord's own parab'l, *Lu. 14. 16. A certain man made a great supper, and bad many, and he sent his servants at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Com, for all things are*

are now ready; and they all with one consent began to make excuse; and the Lord said unto his servants, go out into the high ways and hedges, and compell them to come in, that my house may be furnished with guests. This parabol will fully reconcile our Lord's threats with the spirit of Love: for it declareth, that the Lord's proper design was not to Troubl his neighbors, but to Fess them. His first work was to provide a great supper, and then many guests to enjoy it; to which end he secondeth his large provisions with kind invitations: But when few or none can this way be prevailed with, to leav the farms and cattel which they have bought, or the Lusts which they have espoused; either all the provisions must be lost, or som other means used, more suitab'l to the necessity than to the nature of a fest.

We must therefore distinguish the Principal End from the Subordinate Means, who's whole buisness is to serv That End: And since the End is chosen for its own sake, and the Means only for the Ends sake; we must advance the spirit of Love as much as is Possib'l; but That of Fear, only so much as is Necessary; Comply with it so far as to follow it from the Hegg to the Hous, and then dismiss it to exercise its kind rudeness upon others who need it.

And thus I hope I have fully accounted for my first position; *The Gospel doth not design to draw us by Fear, but Love*; and it is for Love's sake, if Fear be at all employed. Com we now to our Second.

H. THE mistake of this is the cause that the Gospel and its preachers are so hated by the world.

What can we expect, but contrary causes must produce contrary effects? If therefor our preaching

ing be different from that of the Apostl's, our reception must be so to : if glad tidings make the messengers feet beautiful, evil tidings must needs make them loathsom. *Ahab's* inference is Natural, thogh scarce Reasonab'l: *I hate him, bicaus he prophesieth not good of me, but evil* : And whatsoever *Jehoshaphat* can say to the contrary, such a Prophet shall be sentenced to the bread and water of affliction. And hereof the proof is but too evident, in all our enemies, which may be reduced to two regiments.

1. Those that hate All religion in general. (particular.

2. Those that hate Ours of the Church of England in

1. Of those who hate All Religion in general, som are *Atheists*, and som are *Semi-atheists*.

I. THE ATHEISTS are made such by the spirit of Fear. Upon This only ground did *Epicurus* build his impudent pretence to that gracious title, which the Scripture teacheth us to pay our Lord THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD. For he boasted, that he delivered his disciples from the torment of Fear : But we now heard St. *John* declare, that this is do'n by the spirit of Love : *Love casteth out Fear*, and for this reason too, *bicaus Fear hath torment*.

The question therefor between Atheism and Religion, is not whether Fear shall be cast out or no? but whether of the two doth it most effectually? *Christ*, or *Epicurus*? Should we insit upon the Weakness or Dangerösness of Atheism, we might easily prove it both insufficient to give any settled peace to the never-that-way secure conscience, and terribly dangerous if at last it prove fals.

But my present work rather prompts me to insit upon this, that it maketh not the least pretence to

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the Beauty admired in my Text, but wholly renegs all glad tidings of good things: It's utmost aim is to cast out Fear, without a thought of making our joy full.

And this indeed is the proper ground whereon to fight out the quarrel. Whilst we dispute whether there be a God and Providence, or no, we maintain but a hedge fight, wherein the enemy may make a bad shift to skulk behind his bushes and ditches: But if we dispute concerning our own Happiness, even our Present happiness, whether it be greater in a Religious life or in a Sensual, then we charge him home in his own ground, and leav him no shelter.

Colotes it seems was the first Epicurean, that ever appeared in this field: For he wrote a Treatise professing to prove, that upon the principles of the Religios, it is impossib'l to live pleasantly. Against this Plutarch opposeth another Treatise, proving that upon the principles of Epicurus a man cannot so much as live; and thus boasteth of his work: *This is to trample upon their bellies, and put them to fight for their very flesh; to take pleasure from men that do nothing but cry, we are no good soldiers, nor scholars, nor magistrates, but we love to make good cheer, to banquet, and fill our flesh with all delights, until the pleasure mount to the very soul; to rob such men of pleasure is to rob them of life.*

Thus doth he crow, and upon this ground comparing the pleasures of the Spirit in Religios Fests, with those of the Flesh in Sensual; apparently trample the Epicurean to dirt: yet with force how short of the Gospel! who's Joys are fed with Hopes more glorios, and Evidences more incontestab'l, than could enter into Plutarch's imagination.

Here then let us take our post: Let us not so much

much contend for the Truth of the Gospel, as its Joys: Yea let us argue from its Joys, for its Truth; since infinite goodness will not fail to make That truest which is Best. Let us compare the Fruits of the Spirit with That of the Vine; the Beauty of Holiness with That of a Whore; the Pleasures of an Angel with those of a Beast; and he cannot scape the evidence, that his choice is as foolish as impious.

True (saith *Plutarch*) we must be careful to shun superstitious fear, as the most pernicious error in the world: and herein he proceedeth so far as to say, that it is less impious to deny God to have Any being, than to character him such as superstition apprehendeth him. Let the comparison pass for odious, our Apostl putteth us above any need of it: When he saith, Love casteth out Fear, he condemneth it sufficiently, though he say not whether it be more or less guilty than its daughter Atheism.

Objection. *What then? must we not fear God as our Savior admonisheth?*

Ans. Yes, as our Savior admonisheth, but no otherwise: For we must distinguish Fear that hath Torment, from fear that hath only Caution. Love casteth not out That fear that keepeth waking, but that which tormenteth; it Therefor casteth it out, BECAUSE it hath torment; That is the Reason, and That is the Measure; Just the same Fear, and in the same Measure, as That Reason requireth, but no more.

The Best and Greatest Subject so feareth the Law of his Prince, as to beware he run not upon its Punishments; yet is he not thereby hindered from living cheerfully upon those honors and riches, which by the same Law he enjoyeth: A good man may be ve-

ry careful to avoid the Threats, yet chearful in festing upon the Promises of the Gospel. Yea, our Apost'l himself so far cherisheth this kind of Fear, as to say, *I keep my body in subjection, lest possibly when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away.*

II. THE SEMIATHEISTS, who mount not the scorers chair, so as to oppose All Religion; yet keep distance from a Religios life, and they are kept at that distance by Fear: And under this character com not only the Worst, but the Most: Not only those for whom the Apost'l declareth the Law to have been made, *the lawless and disobedient, the ungodly and profane, &c.* but the unscandalously wicked; yea such moral men, of whom we may say as our Lord did of the young man, they are *not far from the Kingdom of God*: Such as would pass thro the world with as litl guilt as possib'l, but with as litl troubl too; and therefor put repentance as an evil day far from them, not in love to their Lusts, but their Ease.

They hear an evil report of Repentance, which must be their entrance upon a Religios life: Those who press it and its conditions, speak in a stile opposit to St. John, *these things we write to you, that your grief may be full.* Those who adventure upon it, complain that such a grief is no more in their Power, than it is for their Pleasure: And those who have long served under it, are as far from freedom as at first; but live as much tormented with fear that their repentance is insufficient, as at first they were with repentance it self.

For those who are broght to Repentance by Fear, are still to cherish That fear, as their best security from relaps: They must ever and anon, but special-ly

ly when they are to receive the holy communion, be anxiously examining themselves, whether their repentance be sound, and themselves in the state of grace, or no? and they are directed by Teachers as melancholy as themselves, and marks, which rather multiply than remove their fears.

They are told of a twofold hypocrisy, open, and secret; and the bounds between the Least that saving grace requireth, and the Most that a hypocrite may perform, are so undiscernab'l, that they cannot be sure whether they be in the one state or the other: But still, the more they Examine, the less they Satisfie themselves; they bate and flutter without End, or any other fruit but this, that they entang'l themselves more; and perhaps at last sink into deep melancholy, incurab'l either by Spiritual or Corporal Physician: and by so sad a spectacle the by-standers take warning to shun the place of Torment, and hate their Ministers as Tormentors: So the Christian World is almost all divided, between such as are frighted from a Religios life, and such as live fearfully under it.

It is worth more time than I can allow, fully to convince either party of their error: but it is of so great import, that I must (however briefly) avow that it proceedeth in Both from taking repentance by the wrong handl.

I. THOSE who are frighted from Religion by the hardship of Repentance. It would not be so terrible if we received it by the spirit of Love: because it would be neither so Difficult to be obtained, nor so Troublesom in the performance.

1. Not so difficult to be obtained: Observe the Love of God as proclaimed in the Gospel, and answer that
Love

Love of God, so as to be able to say with the Apost'l
We love God, because he loved us first; and forbear
 grieving for your sins, if you can. I say again Love
 God, and forbear to grieve for having offended him,
 if you can. But be sure you cannot, for it is utterly
 impossib'l to forbear grieving, when we have offend-
 ed whom we love.

2. Yet fear not you that love your Ease; this
 grief will not disturb it: For as I said of Fear, so say
 I of Grief; there is a grief that hath *Torment*, and
 there is a grief that hath only *Tenderneſs*; a grief
 that hath *Bitterneſs*, and a grief that hath only *Sharp-
 neſs*: and That, such a sharpneſs, as shall not mar
 your fest, but improve it with its poignance. This
 is that *grata aciditas* which recommendeth bankets;
 it is so sweetned by the sence of God's pardoning
 goodneſs, that it is none of the meanest part of the
 joys of the Spirit.

I pray you take notice, and remember it, I deny
 not but grief is necessary; I confess it is impossib'l
 a penitent soul can be without it. But this grief as
 it is Necessary, so it is Natural; as a gracious soul can-
 not be without it, so can he not Wish to be so: it
 costs him no pain, either to obtain or exercise it.

But the grief that proceedeth from the spirit of
 Fear is every way contrary.

1. It is hard to be obtained. To fear God's pu-
 nishment, and for That reason to grieve for sin, and
 thence to love God for pardoning upon such repen-
 tance; This is to go quite against the hair, both in
 grace and nature: In Grace, because the Apost'l
 declareth, that Love casts out Fear, and how can
 Fear bring in that Love by which it self is cast out?
 In Nature, because That cannot but shun Fear and
 Grief

Grief; and that, not only as it is corrupted, but in its whole integrity:

When we address our selves to Love, we shall not miss of the grief of Tenderness, because it is Love's certain attendant; but if we address our selves to Grief, we court the Handmaid, which we cannot obtain by the Mistress; and if we address to That grief which proceeds from Fear, we court a Scoundrel, that is as coy as worthless; no less an enemy to Loving grief, than to our own inclinations.

Obj. Is not Repentance the first step to Conversion? and is not Repentance, Grief?

Ans. That duty which the Gospel prescribeth as necessary to salvation, is not only a Step to conversion, but Conversion it self; it is not only Grief for what is past, but Change for the future.

We are miserably abused by a base Translation: I appeal to you that understand the Greek and Latin Tongues, whether *μετάνοια* or *μετάνοια* be any kin to the Latin words, *Repentance*, *Penance*, *Attrition*, or *Contrition*, by which the Latin Priests (with no less injury to the Gospel, than to the words; to their own great advantage, but inestimab'l loss of souls,) have translated them; that so they might translate the Duty it self, from Turning to Grieving.

And I appeal to your ^bBibles, whether in the whole New Testament you meet any word that declareth Grief necessary to salvation? I know St. James prescribeth it to the insolent wanton rich, as a specifick for That particular vice; but where do you find it enjoined as universally necessary for All kinds of sinners?

No, the Spirit of God knew, that the Grief

a *Act. 2.* b *Act. 3.*

which

which issueth from Love, needs not be commanded, because it floweth naturally from that fountain: and the other grief, which proceeds from Fear, is not worth commanding, because it is not worth accepting, as having nothing but Torment.

It is a great maim to the happiness of mankind, but a much greater to the glory of God's goodness in Christ; that for That very reason it is enjoined, for which it is to be cast out. For we are told, that Christ hath not redeemed us from Temporal punishment, though he have from Eternal: but we must our selves pay the temporal price, either in this life by voluntary grief and penances, proportional to our guilt, or in the other life by the fire of Purgatory, &c.

Were this true, it would make one half of the Gospel: And as the story it self is a great disparagement to the sufficiency, either of our Lord's Sufferings, or his Love; if Those could not purchase, or This would not grant us a full redemption, as well from the one punishment as the other; so is it a greater to his Faithfulness, if he would conceale from us the knowledge of what he had left necessary for us to do for our selves.

How many Souls must there now and in all ages ly frying in Purgatory, that had never com'n thither, if our Lord had been as kind as himself charactered the damned rich man, who did all his possib'l, that his brethren might have warning of that place of Torment! And how can such poor souls scape the temptation, to blaspheme that Neglect, that exposed them to such danger without warning; yea! That Treachery, that deluded them with promises of Full and Free pardon, without the Least intimation of any grief or penance, necessary to be suffered either
in

in the one life, or the other! Were this true, the sum of Christ's benefits must upon due computation rise no higher than this, that *he Redeemed us from Hell, and Betrayed us to Purgatory.*

Blessed be God, who hath shewn us a better escape than by Grief and Penance: The Love that casteth out Fear, for this reason *because it hath torment*, will for the same reason cast out such Grief too: *In Christ Jesus nothing else is Needful, because nothing else Avail-eth; but Faith working by Love:* Let That so inflame our hearts, as to melt them with a genuine sorrow, purging them from all their dross; and we need not fear any other Purgatory, nor seek any other Grief.

II. THOSE who make, not Repentance only, but the whole course of a Religious life a state of Torment, are no less abused by the same spirit of Fear; which perpetually tormenteth them with doubts, and putteth them upon enquiries, whether they be in the state of salvation or no? This they call Self-examination, and their Teachers prescribe it as a Spiritual duty frequently to be used, but especially before the holy Communion. But if Fear will hear reason, it may consider, That however Self-examination be by all wise men of all Religions highly magnified, yet is it not to be exercised by All men in the same manner.

1. To those that are Enemies or Strangers to Godliness, as it is most necessary, so it is most easie: They need not much examining whether they be in a good state or no? the first glance discovereth the contrary; the Question proper to Them is this, Whether it be better to continue in That state, or come out of it? To which question more Seriousness than Time is required.

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2. Those who have forsaken their sins, especially those who have for any considerable time don't so, may with as great Fruit as Pleasure examine,

1. What progress they make? By comparing their present stature in Christ, with that of the last month or year, they may increase it.

2. They may daily examine their daily actions, that they may beg pardon for what they shall find ill done, and pay thanks for what they shall find well; and take Warning from the One, and Courage from the Other, to do better the next day.

3. But to question their whole interest in Christ, whether they be Children or Enemies to God? to be anxiously solicitous upon such a question as This, 'I am not so sure that it is a Religious, yea or a Safe exercise at all; as I am that there are pernicious mistakes in the Rules prescribed for the performance; particularly in this, that there is too much partiality shewn for Fear against Hope; whereas plain Reason would persuade us, to judge as favorably for our selves as our evidences can permit, since severity can do very little (if any) good, but may do much hurt.

1. It can do but little good, for it can only repeat the lesson wherein we are already perfect: Our Fear of the worst is the very Reason which puts us upon examining our selves; when we severely censure our selves, this is no more but that we fear the worst: so we end where we began: the whole exercise is running a circle of Fear, without the least progress in Grace.

2. It is not only a Fruitless labor, but a Dangerous temptation, If we fear that God hateth Us, nature will prompt us to hate God in our own defence; and so far to turn Atheists, as to wish there were no God.

Such fear as this, Love certainly must cast out, and it cannot be our duty to help It to cast out Love; but on the contrary to cherish the Antecedent of the Apostol's argument for the Consequent's sake: *We love him, because he loved us first*; and thence take spurr to serv him by the mesures of thankfulness, *i. e.* without mesure.

II. **W**E HAVE seen what an enemy Fear is to Religion in general: Consider we now how much it is so to our own in particular; and we shall soon discover that our enemies on Both hands, the Papists, and Nonconformists, are made such by the spirit of Fear.

I. THE PAPISTS (it is plain) have corrupted the Gospel from a *doctrine according to Godliness*, to a doctrine according to Interest; especially in its two great limbs, *Faith*, and *Repentance*. *Articls of Faith* they have multiplied, and in every one multiplied difficulties, on purpose to make an infallib'l guide necessary to determin them: and *Conditions of Repentance* they have multiplied and imbittered, on purpose to fright men, not out of their Sins, but out of their Reason and their Mōny: They drive men To Repentance by fear of Damnation, and From Repentance by fear of its Torments, and allow them no quiet but by the Priest's Absolution.

If now there be This only difference between Us and Them, that We Drive men to Repentance by the same Fear, and Torment them in it with the same Grief, but do not reliev them by the same Remedies; we have much less reason to wonder, that som half-considering peop'l run from us to them, than that

so many scape the temptation; especially seeing how greedily Fear and Pain catch at any (however improbable) offer of help.

II. That the NONCONFORMISTS on the other side are possessed by the same evil spirit, needeth no other evidence but this, That they are frightened from our Communion, by such things as themselves acknowledge Indifferent. *Fears and Jealousies* fill both pages, both in their Religion and Polity. Their whole constitution is sowed by the melancholy humor; uneasy both to Themselves and others, especially their Governors.

It is not possib'l in fewer and plainer words, both to Describe and Condemn this unhappy spirit, than we have found do'n by our Apost'l: *You have not received the spirit of Fear, but of Power, of Love, and of a Sound mind.* Love is opposed to Fear; Power, to Weakness; a Sound mind, to a Pained one.

I wish he had never spoken worse, who said, that to be much and long troubled with any scruple, is a certain indication of a weak and cowardly spirit; because if the weight be considerably greater in either scale, the suspens will soon be ended; if not, the cause of doubt must be very light; and to be much troubled about light matters, must needs signify great weakness.

Objection, *What then? must we think any sin list? or can we be too fearful of the least?*

Answer. Distinguish between Sin *Known*, and Sin *Suspected*. We must more fear the least *Known* sin, than the most cruel death: But to fear that which we only *Suspect* to be sin, as much as that which God hath declared to be so; This is it self a sin against God,

God, because it maketh our own Suspicion equal to his Laws : and against our Selves, our Country, and our Governors ; because we trouble them without competent reason.

Our Lord's parabol will illustrate this : *The Gospel is a great Lord's Feſt* ; and at ſuch a Tab'l you may eaſily diſcern the Welbred from the Clown, by the frankneſs of his carriage. He payeth all due deferences to his great Inviter : careful not to do or ſay any thing that may offer him the leaſt diſguſt, nor to neglect any thing that may in any degree pleaſe him, ſpecially to cary himſelf with ſuch a decent mixture of Humility, and Chearfulneſs, as may ſpeak his joy and thankfulneſs for the favor do'n him. In the Other, you find not the leaſt air of chearfulneſs ; but a Fear to miſ-behave himſelf in every motion of hand or ey, every bit that he bringeth To his mouth, and every word that he uttereth Out of it ; and thus by too much fear of miſbehaving himſelf falleth into it.

Thus differ the truly Religioſ and Superſtitioſ ; the One ſerveth God, with a Careful, yet Chearful ſpirit ; will rather incur the worſt death, than the leaſt ſin ; yet deſpiſeth ſmall ſcruples as unworthy to diſpoſe his frank ſpirit : the Other diſordereth the whole frame of his converſation, by timorofines in ſuch maters as he Knoweth to be indifferent, yet Suſpecteth to be evil : a mere Spiritual Clown !

Which of the two is beſt manners in the Kingdom of God, our Apoſt'l taught both the *Corinthians*, and *Romans*. Both thoſe Churches were troubled with a ſcruple concerning meats offered to Idols ; a ſcruple the more conſiderab'l, becauſe himſelf had taught them, that it is impoſſib'l to partake the Lord's table, and the table of Devils : How doth the Apoſt'l treat this great

Great question? Why, he spurns it, as no other way considerab'l, but in the mischief it might do to the peace of the Churches: *The Kingdom of Heaven* (saith he) *is not meat and drink, but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghost: for he that in these things serveth Christ, is accepted of God, and approved of men: Let us therefor pursue the things that make for Peace, &c.* Apply this decision of that Great controversy, to those pety ones that troub'l our peace, it will Determin-them them the best way, by Destroying them.

The Kingdom of Heaven is no more *Vesture* and *Gesture*, than it is *Meat* and *Drink*; Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghost, are still the best manners in sight of God and Man: and to pursue the things that make for peace, is still the best cours in such litl questions as endanger it.

We have therefore nothing to enquire but this, Who best conform to this Rule? They who in such small maters submit to their Governors, or they who disturb the peace of the Church? However obvios the answer be, it is more obvios what the spirit is, that maketh men in such things troublesom to themselves, and their country: ^aNothing certainly but fearfulness can make a man so to fly his own shadow, as to run into the ditch.

We see the Apost'l thinketh no way better to preserve the peace, than by settling our Fundamental Position: Peace and Joy in the holy Ghost are the best manners in the Kingdom of Heaven, most pleasing to God and man, and the best preservative both of Publik and Private quiet: which is in other words, *The Gospel designeth not our Fear, but our Love.*

I HOPE I have now effectually performed the task I undertook, which was not to exhaust all the contents of my Text, but to dig up that root of bitterness, which so undeservedly troubleth the world; and especially the Ministers of the Gospel; and most especially those of our Own Church, who are of all others most unhappy, because whether they prevail or no, they are sure to create themselves enemies.

If they prevail not, then are they treated by the impenitent, as our Lord was by the Devils: *What have we to do with thee? art thou com'n to torment us?* If they do prevail, they do no better than journey-work; either for the Papists, to whom the Sanguin run for Anodynes of Absolution; or for the Non-conformists, to whom the Melancholy run for food for their unsatisfiab'l scruples: So we are hated on All hands; by our enemies in Religion, bicause we will not torment our selves with Their fears; and by our enemies in Irreligion, bicause they suspect we will betray them to that place of torment, which others hate us for renouncing.

But in all that I have spoken to this too necessary purpose, how short am I fallen of the requires of my Text? I have not be'n able to display any of the *glad tidings of good things*: cannot say, as St. John doth, *These things have I spoken, that your joy may be full*; or as St. Peter, *We rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorios*.

Yet have we made no slight advance toward all this, if we have cast out Fear: For this visor once pluckt off, holiness will so display its beauty, that we shall soon find *Plato's* aphorism verified in its charms.

And

And now I have mentioned *Plato*, I shall vouch not only his Opinion, but his Experience! He spoke so much, and so well of the excellences and powers of Love; that the best Fathers of our Religion have not disdained to write after his copy, styling him the Christian Philosopher. *Dion*, the greatest Noble-man in *Syracuse*, went to *Athens* to hear him, and afterward prevailed with him to take a voyage to *Sicily*, to convert his unhappy Prince, miserably corrupted by ill education. He came, and his Fifth labor was to encourage his hearers, that they should not be afraid of vertu: This he perpetually inculcated, and having removed that prejudice, he charmed the whole Court, and especially the young Prince, into such a love of virtue and himself, that never was Lover more fond or jealous: He would not endure that *Plato* should go out of his Palace, hardly out of his sight; was impatient that any beside himself should have any interest in *Plato's* love, made *Plato* Lord of all his power and wealth; and had he not been countermined upon reasons of State, was in a fair way to have resigned up to the love of *Plato* and vertu, that unjust Kingdom, from which he was afterward banished.

For this *Diogenes* upbraided *Plato*, saying, he had flattered a Tyrant; and I doubt not, but some of the same Cynical humor will object against me, that I would have the Clergy flatter the Peop'l.

Plato owned the charge, and so do I. It is our work to flatter our peop'l, just as *Plato* did *Dionysius*; not in their lusts, but One of them; not for our Own-benefit, but Thiers: We must out-flatter *Epi-*

a *Plutarch*, in *Diode*.

curm, yea we must out-flatter *Plato*, we must flatter like our Apost'l, the greatest flatterer in the world: Read his Epist's with application; see if you can match them for tenderness in any of the Romances: He saith in one of them, that he *had espoused his disciples to Christ*; and in that and all the rest he courted them with all the arts and insinuations of a wooer.

And he plainly telleth us, that His and Our Commission require it: *We are* (saith he) *Embassadors for Christ: as if God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Which is a great improvement of my Text, and giveth us title to a nobler welcom: We are not only Messengers, to bring Tidings of peace; but Embassadors, to Negotiate for its acceptance: to Negotiate as in the Person of Christ, yet in the Posture of supplicants. Christ again deposeth himself from his Majesty, and creepeth to his rebellious subjects like a petitioner, begging in most humb'l manner (what? that they would not again destroy him? no, but) that they would permit him to save them: and in this posture are we commissioned to represent him.

True, Embassadors, if they find it necessary, may sharpen their importunities for peace, by displaying the terrib'ness and unavoidable'ness of That destruction, which is to be the portion of the irreconcilable; provided they do it with such tenderness, as may speak their Master's goodness equal to his power; more loth to destroy them, than themselves are to perish.

A preacher of the Gospel (sure) must not com short in kindness to a prophet vnder the Law: yet in this posture doth *Ezekiel* represent God: *As I live saith the Lord, I desire not the death of him that*

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dieth,

dieth, but rather that he will turn and live: turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dy, ye hous of Israel?

Do ye say, that he offereth salvation only to a few Elect? Behold, he saith, yea he sweareth, that he desireth not the death even of *Him that dieth*.

The difference is very observab'l, which our Savior puts between the two sentences. The blessed are invited to the *Kingdom prepared for them from the beginning of the world*: but the cursed are dispatched to the *fire that was prepared (not for Them, but) for the Divil and his Angels*.

There is therefore great difference between Election and Reprobation: The one is a Positive act, the other a mere reterition, which doth not deprive men of Sufficient, yea Abundant means of salvation: The Reprobates are so far from prepared for hell-fire, that the fire is not prepared for Them, but only for the Divil and his Angels. Many indeed will at last find it their portion, but by their own carving: God useth all the means that a Wise and Good father can, to hinder them from it: His Wisdom will not work miracl's except in cases extraordinary; and in such cases (possibly) he may by irresistib'l grace qualify som few chosen vessels for som extraordinary service; but in ordinary, he offereth no such violence to Nature, thogh he use all means suitab'l to it, for the benefit of the creature whom he endeavoreth to make happy.

His Laws are far from grievous, he requireth no Satisfaction for the past, but Amendment for the future; and That Amendment too, he requireth for This only reason, that we may be as happy both now and hereafter as we are capab'l. We are fond of our hedg-fruit bicause we know no better, but he
pro-

provideth for us bankets infinitely more delicious; and he Inviteth, he Intreateth; if this will not prevail, he Driveth us, to this purpose only that we may be happy in his fellowship.

Plato brought the most dissolute to the love of vertu, thogh he had no other motive but its mere beauty, unendowed with any other reward than its self.

But we have commission to promise you a dowry great as its beauty, and to embellish that beauty with most glorios additions. The glory of God's love shineth infinitely brighter *in the face of Jesus Christ*, than in That of the Sun, which was the best glas *Plato* had to see him in: *The earnest of our inheritance* (never heard of by *Plato*) is infinitely more valuabl for the inheritance it secureth; the joys of Hope being incomparably more ravishing, than those which tast nothing but the present.

And is it not both very Sad and very Admirabl, that *Plato* under such disadvantages, should so inamor a dissolute company with naked vertu, and himself its preacher; yet We with such great advantages, prevail no otherwise than to drive our hearers into hatred both of our message and our selvs? Can any thing be more worth our Consideration?

When we have duly considered, we shall find that *Plato* better deserved the title of a preacher of the Gospel, than most have do'n for many ages: For his preaching was in *St. Paul's* stile; he preached not the spirit of Fear, but of Love: But the modern way hath be'n quite contrary; we have heard litl of Love, but much of Fear, and our success hath be'n as different as our message.

Now should I apply all this to the service both of the Gospel and its Ministers: but as I have not Time,

so (if what I have said be well considered) there will be no Need: Not in behalf of the Gospel, bicause if it be once freed from this vizard, its beauty will need no other perswasive to draw us to its embraces: Not in behalf of its Ministers, bicause your very Presence upon this occasion, deserveth applaus, but superseedeth exhortation: I shall therefor say no more, but pray, that as you have begun a good work, you may go on prosperously in it; that your kindness to those who have at least a dubl titl to it, may return a thousand fold in blessings upon you and yours, both in This world and the better; that *the peace of God which passeth all understanding, may keep your hearts and minds* &c.

ANNOT.

A N N O T A T I O N S.

A *Not.* 1. To which may be reduced all others of the same air.] *Such is that which we meet in the close of Heb. 12.* Serv God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire. *This seemeth to contradict our Position both in Plain terms, and with a potent Reason: but if we carefully view the whole context, it will appear otherwise.*

For the words immediately foregoing say, Wherefor we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, ~~ye~~ yeours, let us be thankful, that we may serv God acceptably: Where that we may reconcile Fear with Thankfulness, we must look back to the premises, whence the inference is drawn, which is offered in the word Wherefor: which are no less than a Rhetorical, or rather Poetical, Amplification, of what we but now found plainly laid down. We have not received the spirit of bondage again to Fear, *vers.* 18, 19, 20, 21, but we have received the spirit of Adoption. *vers.* 22, 23, 24. whence the 25th verse immediately inferreth, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if They escaped not who refused him that spake on Earth, much more shall not We escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven: which again is repeated with a threat, which requireth us to look much further back to Deut. 4. 23. where Moses warneth his Israelites in these words, Take heed unto your selves lest ye forget the Covenant of the Lord your God, for the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

The words then being mesured by the proper design of the whole discours, must be a threatening of those that shall turn from Christ: mesured by the Premises which they attend as a Conclusion; they must import so much greater punishment to be due to those that desert the Gospel, by how much the Covenant is more gratios: so that the Threat is not leveled against those that Profess the Gospel, but against those that Forsake it; and it is so far from contradicting our Position, that it is built upon its Amplification.

A Nnot. 2. We are miserably abused by a base Translation.] For upon no better ground than this wretched Translation is built the whole doctrine of Penance among the Papists, and the dread of Repentance among the Reformtd.

The Papists, having once taken the confidence to render the indispensabl duty *μετάνοια* by Pœnitentia, proceed to improve this their precious word, by straining it as much beyond its constant signification, as That exceedeth the import of the word, which it pretendeth only to translate. For whereas [Pœnitentia] in no other case signifieth any more than [Repentance] i.e. Grief of mind, they have enlarged it to signifie [Penance,] which signifieth a further punishment of Body or Purs: and upon this dubly fals ground they have thus built their Sacrament.

He that is fallen into sin after Baptism, cannot be restored but by the Sacrament of Penance, which consisteth of three parts, Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction.

1. Contrition is grief of mind in sence of guilt incurred. Guilt importeth obligation to Punishment; from which the sinner cannot be absolved, but by the Priest,

Priest, to whom Christ hath given power to bind and loose : This power the Priest cannot exercise without knowledge of the guilt, wherewith the Penitent is bound : therefor

2. The Penitent must humb'l himself before the Priests Tribunal, (*it is the very expression of Trent*) with full and particular Confession of every sin, and every circumstance, submitting to such punishment as he shall prescribe, in order to Absolution: and

3. The Priest must not grant Absolution, without such Penance as may bear som proportion to the crime. For (*saieth the Trent meeting*) Christ hath satisfied for the Crime, but not for the Punishment; *which the B. of Condom hath made easier to be Understood, but not easier to be Believed, by this explication:* That he hath changed a greater punishment into a lesser, *i. e.* Eternal into Temporal. If therefor the Penitent fail either of fully confessing every sin, or of fully performing the penalty imposed; Either of These, or som other defects, must be abundantly punished with the fire of Purgatory, which cometh short of Hell only in duration.

If we look for Reasons for all this, we shall find none in Scripture, but abundance in the world. All the Abbies, Priors, Chantries, &c. in Christendom, All the pomp and grandeur of the court of Rome &c. are so many benefits of this Sacrament to the Clergy; and assurance of Absolution upon easie Penance, to the Laity.

For can it be, but the Priest must be highly revered, to who's Tribunal the greatest must creep, to who's ears they must communicate their most shameful sins, and from who's mouth they must receive their sentence? without who's help they cannot hope for pardon, and by who's help they are secure of it? Or can any person of bowels think

think any cost too much, to pay off the intolerabl torments, wherein their own or their dearest friends souls may fry, they know not how long, in the flames of Purgatory? It was but lately proved that a poor Maid gave, not only all she was worth, but a Bond for a greater Summ, to a greedy Priest, who refused on any cheaper terms to free her father's soul; and how often they meet such bargains in the fears of dying persons, it is impossibl to compute.

God be blessed we have reformed from all the base gains which are gotten by the word Penance: but we still remain too strong a tincture of its first princip'l, in point of Fear and consequent Grief; derived from the word Repentance; the very sound whereof striketh so hard upon our minds, that we cannot but believ, the great Duty which is expressed by That Word, must be performed by That Passion.

We do (indeed) well to distinguish between two kinds of Grief; and we do well to declare, that Grief which arises from Fear, is nothing worth; if it bring us not to that which issueth from Love: But still we stick to This, that Repentance is Grief: and that however it be not accepted until it amount to Contrition, yet doth it ordinarily begin at Attrition, to which therefor we must first apply our selves. But

1. What reason have we to believe that Attrition will bring us to Contrition? Do we conclude them neer of kin, because they wear the same surname? Let us not look so much to the Name, as the Family. Fear (we know) is no friend to Love: and why shall we believe that Grief which issueth from the One, must be our best mediator to the Other?

2. Why must wee needs make our first addresses to Grief of either kind? Grief is an Enemy, but Love is a Friend: It is the first mover in all our affections, even those which seem

seem most opposit to it : We neither Hate, nor Fear, nor Grieve, but by the dictates of Love : And the Love of God will constrain us to (do, what without it we can hardly obtain of our selves) grieve when we have offended him. If we perform this great duty in the proper sense of the words, Turn to God with all our heart ; the weeping and mourning will not fail to follow ; nor hath the Scripture been deficient, though it have not prescribed them.

This is not a bare contention about words, but the most practical consideration in the world : Holiness of life is highly concerned in it, as having suffered more by This than All other errors : For on One side, men are Frighted by the apprehension of Grief, as an enemy to our quiet ; and on the Other side, they are encouraged to hope, that this may with more ease, and equal safety be undergone, when the days com wherein we shall say, we have no pleasure in them, or when that hour cometh, when we can do nothing else but grieve.

This conceit, however discountenanced by Divines, yea by Experience, which sheweth that generally men dy as impenitent as they live ; yet so partial are we to our sins and sloth, that the word [Repent] shall carry it against all the weight that can be laid against it.

And here I cannot but applaud the amendment our Church hath made in the first sentence of our Liturgy. Of old it was, At what time soever a Sinner shall Repent from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance, saith the Lord ; which was wont to be pleaded in behalf of death-bed repentance : But now the very words of the Prophet are set forth, When the wicked man turneth away from wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive :

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which

which may infer, that the promise is made, not to Grieving, but Turning; and to such Turning too, as proceedeth to contrary actions. Were our Translation of the New Testament so reformed, that in stead of Repentance we might read, Turning, Changing, Amendment, or som such honest word, as would faithfully render the Original; it would remove that unhappy temptation, which hath so much discountenanced Conversion, by representing it both Hard and Needless in Youth, Easie and Safe on the Death-bed.

A Nnot. 3. I appeal to your Bibles.] We find one text that seems to look That way, and for That reason, as it makes much talk, so doth it deserv our careful consideration. It is in 2 Cor. 7. 10. Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

These words separated from the Context, though they deny that Grief and Repentance be the same thing (for if the One work the Other, they must differ as the Workman doth from his Work) yet because they seem to import a dependence of One upon the Other, require our answer. And

1. Tho these words seem to look this way, they com short of the concept we contend against. For the most they import is this; that the Apostl's reproof had made them so sory, that they amended their fault; which certainly falleth very short of making That Repentance which the Gospel requireth of every sinner, to be no more nor less but Sorrow.

2: Those words do not look this way, as we must needs perceiv if we look about us: for

Such was the Apostl's Evangelical spirit, so unwilling to exercise Punishment upon offenders, that he shunneth the very word, and expresth it by Grieving. This

appeareth most evident in the twelfth chapter of the same Epist'l, vers. 20. I fear lest when I com I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as you would not; lest there be debates, wraths, &c. and lest when I come again my God will humb'l me among you, and that I shall BEWAIL many, which have sinned already, and have not repented &c. And chap. 12. 2. I told you before, and foretell you as if I were present the second time, and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that if I com again, I will not spare.

He had in his former Epist'l reproved them for not censuring a most scandalous person, 1 Cor. 5. It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his fathers wife; and ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath do'n this deed might be taken away from among you, i. e. in the sense now mentioned, you have encouraged him, and not punished him by excommunication.

In this Epist'l he taketh notice of that affair: in the second chapter he justifieth himself for having grieved them, approveth of their obedience, and adviseth them to absolve the criminal, now sufficiently punished. And in this chapter taketh occasion to resume it, as appeareth by v. 8. For tho I made you fory with a Letter, I do not repent thogh I did repent; and more plainly v. 12. thogh I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that did the wrong, (i. e. the incestuous Son,) nor for his cause that suffered wrong, (i. e. the injured Father,) but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.

The eleventh verse, which setteth forth the fruits of their sorrow, is closed with this Epiphonema: In all things you have approved your selves to be clear in this mater: which plainly sheweth that the sorrow which he so applaudeth, was not sorrow for any crime of their Own, and consequently was not such Repentance as is necessary for every sinner in respect to his Own sins; but an Idiom of the Apost'l, whereby he expresseth Ecclesiastical censures: which in the tenth vers he compareth with Civil punishments, saying that the one worketh the greatest good without the least ill consequence, but the other worketh death.

This exposition seemeth more necessary to enlighten the Apost'l's discours, than to answer what may be thence objected. For whether you accept it or no, you cannot avoid acknowledging that the discours is very obscure in many of its clauses, and in its whole design: and This very Obscurity is sufficient to disable it from stablishing a fundamental doctrine.

Heb. 12. 12. We find Repentance from dead works Owned for a Foundation of the Gospel: Had he said Repentance FOR dead works, Grief might have pleaded som title; but the partic'l FROM importeth more than a Passion, and no less than Turning: to Turn from dead works is a good phrase in Grammar, as well as a good work in Morality; but to Grieve From an ill work, is a stile unpractised in any language that I know,

Yet this is a Foundation, and as such ought to be firmly laid: Can we then justify our Lord as no less faithful than Moses in all his hous, if neither by himself nor any of his Apost'ls, he left any One Precept, so clear as to be above danger of mistake; but we must retein for all our knowledge of our Fundamental duty, to an accidental word

word, occasionally dropt by our Apostl, and that so obscurely, that we cannot be secure of its meaning? Such a concept certainly will it self need Repentance.

A Nnot. 4. I am not sure that it is a Religios exercise.] I T herefor cannot be sure that it is a Religios exercise, much less that it is a necessary Duty, so to examin myself as is vulgarly prescribed; becaus I neither find it Enjoyed by any Precept, nor Recommended by any Examp^l in holy Scripture.

I find indeed two words of St. Paul to the Corinthiaus, whereof the One seemeth to Intimate it, the Other expresly to Require it.

The Former, 1 Cor. 17. 27. Let a man Examin himself, and so let him eat of That Bread, and drink of that Cup : Which is generally believed to signifie, that we must Examin, whether we be worthy to receive the Lord's Supper or no? which is not Less but More, than whether we be in the state of Grace, or no? But upon full consideration we must find, that the Apostl cannot mean such an Examination as shall leave us in suspense, or forbid our Communicating, (for the very same breath absolutely requireth us to do it without any exception or limitation,) but such as shall prevent the crime he there reproveth, which was their doing it in an unworthy Manner: To which end it is not necessary to examin, what Right we have to the Lord's Supper, but what Reverence? not what we have already do'n, but what we are about to do? And whatever self-examination exceedeth this end, will be Impertinent; whatever hindreth the Performace of the later clause of the Precept, (so let him Eat,) will be Opposit to the Apostl's intentions, as at large is proved in the foregoing Treatise, and is now further confirmed; if the practice of such self-examination be useles and

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prejudicial, not only in order to the Sacrament, but to all other good purposes.

The other word, which seemeth expressly to require us to examin our interest in Christ, we meet 2 Cor. 13. 5. Examin your selves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves, know you not that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates? But all the foregoing and following context will forbid us to imagin, that the Apost'l should require them to examin themselves concerning what was not then in question or mention. It is plain that his discourse reflecteth upon the punishment which they had Formerly Neglected, and upon his admonition Lately Inflicted, upon a most scandalous offender; yet so, that som among them seemed to question His authority, and perhaps That of the Church, for so doing, and therefore seek a proof of Christ speaking in him. Such persons in the now-recited words he admonisheth to examin themselves, not concerning their interest in Christ by his saving grace, but concerning their relation to him as a visib'l Church, and their consequent authority to judge those that are within, as in the former Epist'l he expresseth it.

Our Incomparab'l Dr. Hammond hath to this sense paraphrased this text; wherein he supposeth that *ἐν ὑμῖν* signifieth, not IN, but AMONG you; and that the Apost'l thereby alludeth to Exod. 17. 7. where the tempting contumacious Israelites, after all the signs and miracle's shewed among them, ask in these very words, *οὐκ ὁ θεὸς ἐν ὑμῖν*, is the Lord among us or no? so that the meaning of the Apost'l's question here is; many miracle's of Christ and his Spirit have be'n wrought among you, so that if you do not believ that I am an Apost'l, and so that Christ is among you, you are (sure) of the number of those Israelites, who after so many

many mirac'ls still required more signs. Thus our Excellent Doctor.

But if we will not look so far, we shall find a fair occasion for the word IN, and for his playing with the word Reprobate too, in the third verse. Whereas you seek *δοκίμιον*, a Proof of Christ speaking In me: Examine it well, and you shall find him in your selves, when you censure such offenders as are within: if not, you are *ἀδελφοί*: which word, that it cannot here signify Reprobates in that strict sense, appeareth, because he immediately addeth, I hope you shall find that We are not Reprobate: but he descanteth upon their own word *δοκίμιον*, repeating it no less than five times in two verses, in a sense which must therefor answer their own: 'You seek an Evidence of Christ speaking in Me, as in his Apostol: I have already pleaded, that If I be not an Apostol to Others, yet doubtless I am to You, for the seal of mine Apostolship are ye in the Lord, and I need no other evidence: Examine therefore your selves, whether ye be in the faith which I preached among you: Do ye not know that Christ is in You, as in his Church planted by my ministry; except ye be vile persons, which have no (*δοκίμιον*) appearance of Christianity?

This the context evidenceth to be the true meaning of those words, who's singl voice must outvote a multitude of other express texts, and the fundamental design of the Gospel, which invite us to rejoyce in God.

WE are miserably mistaken in the rules and measures,] as may appear, not only by the Reason glanced at from their dangerous tendency, or by the Silence of Scripture, which in mater of duty is equivalent to a Negative; but by the contrary conduct of the Apostl in go.

governing this exercise. For however his words seem to prescribe self-examination as every mans duty, yet doth he plainly direct it to a quite contrary purpose.

His words are, Gal. 6. 4. Let every man prove his ownwork: Let Every man without exception; Prove *ἑαυτοῦ*, examin, his own Work, in the most comprehensive sense (as the French express a man's whole business by *son fait*) else will the Plaster be too narrow for the Sore, which is discovered in the words immediatly foregoing; If a man think himself to be som thing when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself: All this seemeth to amount to no less than Let every man examin the state of his own soul, that he may not be deceived, but certainly understand, whether he be a lively member of Christ or no.

I shall not fence with these words, by pleading that by Every man is meant Every man Concerned in the advice, which is directed only to them which are Spiritual; or that by *ἑαυτοῦ* is meant not only Prove, but Approve: but, which is much better, I shall mesure the Plaster by the Sore, the Meaning of the Words by the Design of the Author; which the first verse discovereth to be Charity to offenders: the Means prescribed for this good end is Self-consideration: 1. Consideration of human frailty, whereto while himself is subject, he is neither above the Reach, nor secure against the Power of the temptation. 2. Consideration of his own Experience, which if he examin, may inform him, that himself hath be'n guilty, perhaps of the Same, perhaps of Greater crimes.

This is the plain design of the precept: it is prescribed as a specifick against a particular evil, to cauterize the proud flesh, to lance the swelling apostem, to divert the sharp humor, from our neighbors to our own weakness or wickedness; to pass from judging another to judging
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our selves; wherein we shall have better Evidence, better Authority, and better Success.

And what Success doth the Apost'l promise? Is it, thou shalt be frightened at thy danger, and confounded with thy guilt? This (indeed) one would expect, as most serviceabl^e to the purpose in hand: but because it is least so, to the general design of the Gospel, the Apost'l turneth short to a quite contrary inference, and then shall he have rejoycing. How careful, that no particular precept should cross the Universal! that his Precepts should have no worse consequent than his Reproofs! But may clear themselves, and say, as he did in his Apology to the Corinthians, for having made them sorry, 2 Cor. 7. 9. you have received damage by us in nothing; which this exercise can hardly be able to plead, if fear hold the scales, and we weigh our selves by grains and scruples, and those authorized only by the precarios dictates of melancholy.

Our Apost'l hath plainly enough told us, that our adequate mark is Faith working by Love: If hereby we examine our selves, the work will be neither tedious in the Performance, nor tormenting in the Issue.

Not tedious in the Performance: for it cannot (sure) require much skill, time, or labor, to search whether I love or no? I look no further than mine own bowels for assurance, whether I love this or that neighbor or kinsman; and why may they not with the same ease and certainty secure me whether I love God or no?

Nor tormenting in the Issue: for at worst I shall be put to no worse penance or task, than to labor for a greater Measure of Love; and all Love's tasks are full of pleasure. To ly down and afflict my self with grief for want of Love, or (as is prescribed in the second place) for want of grief, or with fear for want of any kind of grief &c. is more likely to quench Love than to inflame it. But to

apply my affections to the original of all loveliness, the infinite beauties of God in his own perfections, the glories of his goodness towards his creatures, and to my self in particular, &c. is certainly of all exercises most proper for this end, and most pleasant in the practise: This must needs be the fittest ground for the fruits of the Spirit, Love, Joy, Peace.

A Nnot. 5. Nothing certainly but Fearfulness.] It may be worth observing, how the light of Nature concurrerh with that of the Gospel, to cast out this spirit. For as in All Ages, Nations, and Religions, it hath possessed and tormented the Weakest; so hath it in them All be'n exorcised by the Wisest.

The Greeks gave it a name which expreseth its Nature, the Latins gave it one that expreseth its Operations, for *δαιμόνιον* sheweth it in its Cause; Superstition, in its Effects: That, signifieth Fearfulness towards God; This, signifyeth Overdoing our duty toward him: yet Both agree in the same apprehensions. For when the Greeks describe its Operations, they paint them with the very same colours as do the Latins, witness Theophrastus's Character: and again, when the Latins define its Nature, they do it by the very name which the Greeks have given it; witness Varro, who maketh this the essential difference between Religion and Superstition; that the Superstitios Fear the Gods, while the Religios reverence them as Parents, but do not fear them as Enemies: and what is this other than St Paul's doctrine? You have not received the spirit of Fear, but you have received the spirit of Adoption. Seneca more Laconically giveth us account both of its Nature and Effects: Superstitio error insanus, amandos timet, quos colit, violat: "Superstition is a mad error; whom

'whom it should love, it feareth; whom it worshippeth, it slandereth. And more largely in another place: Sicui intueri vacet, quæ patiuntur superstitiosi, invenies tam indecora honestis, tam indigna liberis, tam dissimilia sanis, ut nemo fuerit dubitaturus furere eos, si cum paucioribus furerent. "If any one be at leisure to view what the superstitious suffer, you shall find things so disgraceful for gentlemen, so unworthy of free men, so unsuitable to sound men, that no man would doubt but they were mad, were they mad with fewer companions. Give us who can, a better explication of those words of St. Paul, which call it, the spirit of bondage, and oppose it to the spirit of Power, of Love, and of a Sound mind.

And all this St. Paul spoke of the Law of Moses, which had been nothing else but Superstition, had not God authorised it: For as throughout the Old Testament Fear is Godliness; so in all the ceremonies of the Law, Obedience hallowed the exercises.

For as I said but now, Superstition, however exploded by the Wisest, ever possessed the Weakest, that is, the Greatest part of mankind: And at That time, the world was not capabl to have it Cured, but only Fomented.

And that upon That very account the Law imposed such exercises as the Gospel forbids, we have a clear discours of St. Paul, in the beginning of the fourth chapter to the Galatians Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, thogh he be Lord of all, but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father; even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the Elements (στοιχεῖα the a, b, c,) of the world. But when the fulness of time was com, God sent forth his Son made of a woman made under the law, to redeem

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them

them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba, father. Wherefor thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

In this discours you have a full discovery of Superstition, its Nature, its Operations, and its Abolition. 1. Its Nature, childishness, requiring the discipline of Fear to govern it: 2. Its Exercises, childish, weak, and beggarly Elements, the first letters that children learn. 3. Its Cure, the spirit of Adoption, sent forth into the hearts of Gods children now grown up to manhood.

*Upon this discours how justly doth he ground his ex-
postulation, ver. 9. Now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, wherein you desire again to be in bondage? When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things. When mankind was unripe in Age, it was so in Understanding, and no wonder its Exercises should be suitabl. It was governed by the rod, and busied about ceremonies; but now it is come to manhood, you are called to have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 Jo. 1. 3. to be partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and consequently of his Wisdom and Holines, his Loves, and his Hates: and therefore to approve things that are excellent. Phil. 1. 10. How is it then, that you still spend your time, your strength, and your labour in whipping of tops, bandying of balls, and playing with nuts, no less childish in your imaginations, than the law of Moses could either Find, or Make you?*

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Thus did the Apostl rebuke the Galatians, and what would he have said to this and som preceding generations, which have outgo'n both Jews and Gentiles in this childishness? and that especially in two great respects.

1. We find not that either Jews or Gentiles disquieted themselves about maters of mere Belief, thogh they did about maters of Action.

2. Nor that they disturbed the peace of their Nations, thogh they did that of their own Minds.

1. They disquieted not themselves with maters of mere belief, conceiving that the true worship of God consisted not in Disputing, but Imitating his Perfections. But we, in mere honor to the glorious promises which are made to Believing, have multiplied Articl's of Faith, and Questions upon every Articl, and Doubts upon every Question; and every one of these we call maters of Faith, and mater of Faith we take to be mater of Salvation, and if we mistake in the One, we believ we shall miss of the Other. Hence is it that Catholik and Heretik among the Romanists, Orthodox and Heterodox among the Beformed, sound so terribly as to fray many a good man, if not quite out of his Wits, yet (which is almost as bad) out of his Corage to use them.

Reason, we are told, must not presume to medl in maters of Faith, but we must deny our selves, no less in our Rational faculties, than in our Sensual appetites; for it is no less impious to Disbeliev God's word, than to Disobey his command: And in This, they speak, not only Truth, but Reason, which therefor they justify by exercising.

But, as it is in Moral vertues, so is it in Faith; it lieth between two extremes, Defect on One hand, and Excess on the Other. It is no less frequent in maters of Faith than in Manners, to teach for Doctrines of God the

the Commandments of Men; in the One tormenting the Mind with needless Mysteries, as in the Other, the Body with needless Penances.

But to Faith what could have be'n more incongruous? Repentance, indeed, in its very name carrieth a sower countenance, importing a mortification of our Natural appetites, and consequently a pain to our hearts: But Faith, whose proper object is Glad-tidings, might justly claim, not only freedom from Pain, but such fulness of joy, as should cast out the grief even of Repentance; whereas now it is made the harder taskmaster of the two. For however painful it be, it is not impossible to cut off hands, or feet, or pull out eyes; but our Reason is not only the Ey, but the Heart of our Soul, not to be cutt or pluckt off: Tormented indeed it may be, and most in those who have most improved it, as the clearest ey is always tenderest: and stupified it may be, yet not to such a privation, but that it will ever and anon feel anxious fits of melancholy, doubting of the truth of som things which are received as matters of Faith, and consequently of our title to Salvation for want of Faith.

Few can at all times bo'st with the Physician, there are not impossibilities enogh in Religion, and fewer with the Father, credo quia impossibile est. It is hard to apprehend, how any thing can be at once True and Impossible; but to make the very Impossibility, a reason why I should believ it, let St. Paul judg, whether this be not cum ratione insanire. For when he would perswade a belief of the Resurrection, he did not urge the impossibility but the contrary: Why should it be thought a thing incredib'l that God should raise the dead? and when hereupon Festus charged him with madness, he replied, I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness. What Soberness can there be in a quite contrary

contrary argument, yea, what plainer madness, than to talk such extravagant inconsistencies, as infer credibility from impossibility?

What other spirit but that of Fear could thus confound mens understandings? Fear, of all passions the most insinuating; Fear, which most frequently blindeth the most piercing judgments; Fear, which maketh every shadow a man, and every bush a thief, and every thief a murderer; Fear, and only fear, can so disorder our minds, that we think it equally necessary to salvation, to believe the niceties of Schoolmen, and the Doctrines of the Gospel; and distrust our interest in Christ, if we can neither satisfy, nor destroy our reason, when it cannot comply with contradictions, which he never enjoyed us to believe.

2. Much less did they embroil the publik peace with controversies in Religion: Whereas among Christians, there is not any question so nice in point of Belief, or so slight in point of Worship; but hath be'n able to engage whole Families in the fiercest contentions, and whole Nations in most bloody wars; yea, for two or three ages there hath hardly be'n a rebellion, whereof Religion hath not be'n either the Real or Pretended cause.

And This, as it is more notoriously scandalous than the now mentioned disquiets of private persons, so is it (if possible) more directly opposit to the most earnest endeavours of the Gospel: which doth indeed very frequently exhort us to joy and comfort in our own spirits; but much more earnestly and solenly provoke us to love and peace toward others: Yea, Love maketh so great a figure in almost every page of the New Testament, that it seemeth not only the Supreme, but almost the Only grace: It looks like unlawful to fight upon Any occasion whatsoever; but to fight for Religion, seemeth no less contradictory, than to fight for Love: And that the Only Religion which com-

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mandeth to beat swords into plow-shares, should be the only religion that forgeth plow-shares to swords; is a fanaticism so irrational, as nothing but Fear could have produced.

The summ therefor is This: The light of Nature agreeth with that of the Gospel, to declare, that we are not to serv God for Fear, but Love: What our Apost'l opposeth to a Sound mind, that our Philosopher caletth a mad error; but the madness is incomparably greater in a Christian, than ever it was, or indeed could possibly be, in a Heathen: For as it is the utmost extravagance of frensy, to beat our selves, or our friends; so in this we exceed the Heathen, that many among Us, but none among Them, disturb their own souls with anxios doubts concerning Faith, or imbroid their Nation with bloody wars upon difference of opinions in Doctrine or Worship; so is it more monstrously mad in a Christian, by how much more clearly and solently the Gospel hath labored to prevent the one and the other, by declaring that we have not received the slavish and mad spirit of Fear, but of Power and Love, and of a sound mind. And again, that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, for he that in these things serveth Christ, is accepted of God, and approved of men: This upright and erect walking, this frank and chearful, this manly yea divine freedom of spirit, as it maketh men more Like God, so doth it make them more Acceptabl to him; it will not only vindicate religion from the obloquies of its enemies, who either despise or fear it, as a curb to generosity and freedom; but recommend it to them as most noble and pleasant: nor will it only silence our quarrels, but endear us in mutual affection.

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